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August 2010

2010 SEP 29 AM 8:50

President Teodoro Obiang
Equatorial Guinea

His Excellency

I am writing to you regarding your speech at the Global Forum in Cape Town in June of this year. I was fortunate to attend and participate in the Forum and have had a chance to read your July 28, 2010, speech committing your nation to a 5-point program of transparency and political, legal, and economic reform.

I was encouraged and impressed by your speech and your willingness to make these public commitments in front of the world's media and to respond-- before, during, and after your speech-- to the media's questions.

I understand how difficult it can be to undertake a plan of this magnitude when you are still in the process of creating a basic infrastructure in your country. I do hope you will be able to move forward as quickly as possible to follow the fine words of your Cape Town speech with the deeds promised, despite these difficulties.

In particular, I hope you will focus as soon as possible on those commitments you made in your speech regarding protecting human rights and democratic institutions, such as a free and independent press, strong and viable opposition political parties, and an independent judiciary. I was also happy to see your continued commitment to the Social Development Fund, to use your energy revenues for the people and children and education and housing. I noted in your speech that you itemized over \$1 billion of such spending in the last year alone.

Finally, I would be happy to publicly endorse specific developments in your transparency and reform program if and as it is implemented. At the outset I understand the highest priority is the return of the International Red Cross headquarters to Equatorial Guinea. The ICRC can help you validate the progress you said in your speech your government has made in the area of human rights, prison conditions, health care and other areas of mutual concern.

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As for me, I will try to do my part to encourage the leading international human rights, democracy, and transparency NGOs to accept your invitation in your Cape Town speech to visit your country, see the situation on the ground, and to study what is happening there.

I hope and trust that human rights organizations will extend a hand to help you in the process of reform.

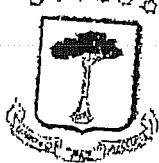
I look forward to help you in any way I can, understanding the limits on my time now that I am entering a less active period of my life in retirement and with more opportunity for reflection.

I hope I may be able to visit your country sometime in the future.

God bless you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Desmond Tutu". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'D' at the beginning.

Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu



KEYWORD INDEX

2010 SEP 29 AM 8:50

El Presidente de la República
de
Guinea Ecuatorial

Mongomo, 15 de Septiembre de 2010

Reverendísimo Monseñor Arzobispo Desmond Tutu
Arzobispo Emérito de la Iglesia Anglicana
Ciudad del Cabo
SUDÁFRICA

Reverendísimo Arzobispo:

Hemos acogido con sumo interés su carta del mes de agosto del presente año relativa a sus buenos comentarios sobre Mi Declaración del 28 de julio ante el Fórum Global organizado en la Ciudad del Cabo, en la que expuse el Plan global de Reformas para asegurar una buena gobernabilidad en Mi País.

En consonancia con las aspiraciones y el apoyo de este Programa que habéis expresado en su carta, quiero informarle que estamos iniciando los siguientes primeros pasos hacia la aplicación de tales reformas:

1) Hemos iniciado un proceso de negociaciones para el establecimiento de una representación del Comité Internacional de la Cruz Roja en Guinea Ecuatorial (CICR) y nos gustaría que estuviera al corriente de los detalles de los progresos que experimentemos en materia de Derechos Humanos. Apoyaremos personalmente al CICR en su evaluación y vigilancia de los derechos humanos y cualquier otra cuestión de interés que tenga.



*El Presidente de la República
de
Guinea Ecuatorial*

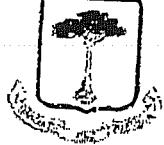
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2) En consonancia con una política nacional asociada con los Estados Unidos de América en la implementación de las reformas, vamos a invitar al Gobierno de los Estados Unidos, a través de su Embajador acreditado en Guinea Ecuatorial, para establecer y financiar una administración profesional e independiente para el Fondo de Desarrollo establecido para el beneficio del Pueblo de Guinea Ecuatorial.

3) Como lo anuncio en Mi Declaración, estamos pidiendo el asesoramiento de una Comisión Consultiva Especial de la Unión Africana para la reforma jurídica que fuese necesaria en Guinea Ecuatorial. Espero que dicha Comisión trabajará con nuestro Ministerio de Justicia, Culto e Instituciones Penitenciarias para hacer recomendaciones sobre el fortalecimiento de un Poder Judicial plenamente independiente en nuestro País.

Como bien lo ha puntualizado en su carta, la simple dotación de la infraestructura no es suficiente para alcanzar el éxito deseado. Pues, es imprescindible contar con recursos humanos cualificados y experimentados capaces de transformar en realidad los nobles objetivos contenidos en Mi Declaración de la Ciudad del Cabo. Necesitamos, por otra parte, contar efectivamente con el apoyo de personalidades e instituciones de prestigio internacional que creen en nuestra determinación de forjar una Nación moderna.

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El Presidente de la República
de
Guinea Ecuatorial

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Agradecemos el apoyo anticipado que habéis dado a nuestra Declaración, pero mucho nos gustaría que efectuéis una visita a Guinea Ecuatorial para conocer sobre el terreno los progresos experimentados y los retos que nos quedan por superar.

Lamentando siempre la pérdida de vidas humanas, los recientes sucesos de Mi País en los que un Tribunal condenó a la Pena Capital por los crímenes de Terrorismo y Atentado Contra la Seguridad del Estado con resultado de muertes, han querido ser interpretados por ciertos círculos críticos como un retroceso del País al no respeto de los derechos humanos, cuando en realidad se apuraron todos los procedimientos de un Tribunal legal, imparcial y contradictorio; cuya sentencia está contemplada en el Código Penal de Guinea Ecuatorial.

Estos sucesos no constituyen ningún impedimento para que continuemos con las reformas que hemos anunciado y que siguen siendo una prioridad para Mi País.

Esperando poder contar con vuestro valioso apoyo, dígnese aceptar, Reverendísimo Señor Arzobispo, la expresión de mis sentimientos más distinguidos.



-OBIANG NGUEMA MBASOGO-

15 September 2010

2010 SEP 29 AM 8:51

Very Reverend Archbishop,

We have received with great interest your letter from August of this year relating your kind comments about my June 28 speech before the Global Forum in Cape Town, in which I presented the comprehensive reform program to ensure good governance in my country.

Consistent with the aspirations and support of that program, which you expressed in your gracious letter, I want you to know that I am today announcing the following first three steps towards implementing reforms:

- 1) We have started the process of negotiations for the establishment of the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Equatorial Guinea ("ICRC"), and we would like you to be up to date on the details of the progress we will make in the area of human rights. We will personally support the ICRC in evaluating and monitoring human rights and prison conditions in my country and other issues of interest to the ICRC.
- 2) Consistent with a national policy of partnering with the U.S. to help implement my reform program, I am inviting the U.S., through the official U.S. Ambassador, to establish and fund an independent professional administration for EG's Social Development Fund for the benefit of the people of Equatorial Guinea.
- 3) As I stated on June 28 in my speech, I am asking the African Union to establish a Special Advisory Committee to advise Equatorial Guinea on judicial reform necessary in our country. I hope that this Commission will work with our Minister of Justice to make recommendations to strengthen an independent judiciary in our country.

As you articulate so well in your letter, the simple endowment of infrastructure is not sufficient to reach the success that we desire. It is therefore essential to have qualified and experienced people who are capable of transforming into reality the noble objectives contained in my Cape Town speech. We also need to be able to count on the support of individuals and prestigious international institutions that believe in our determination to develop a modern nation.

We thank you for the support you gave us for the speech, but we would very much like you to visit Equatorial Guinea to get to know the progress we are experiencing on the ground and the challenges that we continue to face.

Some well-intentioned human rights advocates have expressed the concern, understandable but ultimately unfounded, that the recent events in my country involving judicially-imposed capital sentences for terrorism and attacks on our national security could mean that my country is slipping back towards disrespect for human rights.

These events do not constitute in any way an impediment towards our continuing to work toward the reforms that we announced, and which continue to be a priority for my country.

Hoping to be able to count on your valuable support, and hoping you will accept, Very Reverend Archbishop, Sir, the expression of my most distinguished sentiments.

Obiang Nguema Mbasogo
President of Equatorial Guinea

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2010 SEP 29 AM 8:51

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Archbishop Desmond M. Tutu Supports Equatorial Guinea President Teodoro Obiang's Five-Point Program of Transparency, Political, Legal, and Economic Reform, Announced at Global Forum in Cape Town, South Africa On June 28, 2010

President Obiang Responds Reaffirming Commitment to Reform Program Announced in Cape Town, Including Return of International Red Cross to Assist on Human Rights, U.S. Aid to Assist on Social Development Fund, and African Union Panel To Advise on Independent Judiciary

Washington D.C., September 22, 2010—The Washington D.C. Embassy of the government of Equatorial Guinea today released a previously unpublished letter from Nobel Laureate Archbishop Desmond M. Tutu, written in August 2010 to President Obiang Nguema Mbasogo of Equatorial Guinea, in which Archbishop Tutu wrote that he was “encouraged and impressed” with President Obiang’s June 28, speech committing to broad governmental reforms before the Global Forum in Cape Town, South America.

In that speech, before the world’s media, and civic and business leaders, President Obiang publicly committed that his nation would continue and expand upon a detailed “five-point program of transparency and political, legal and economic reform.”

“I was encouraged and impressed by your speech and your willingness to make these public commitments in front of the world’s media and to respond – before, during, and after our speech – to the media’s questions,” Archbishop Tutu wrote.

President Obiang responded on September 15, 2010, in a personal letter to Archbishop Tutu, committing to:

- Completing negotiations for the return of the International Committee of the Red Cross, who would be involved in “evaluating and monitoring human rights and prison conditions in my country;
- Inviting the assistance of the U.S. State Department, through the Ambassador to Equatorial Guinea, to provide “independent professional administration for EG’s Social Development Fund for the benefit of the Equatorial Guinea people;” and

- Asking the African Union to establish a “Special Advisory Committee” to advise Equatorial Guinea on judicial reform and to work with the Minister of Justice “to make recommendations to strengthen an independent judiciary in our country.”

In his August letter to President Obiang, Archbishop Tutu acknowledged that the President would face difficulties in “undertak[ing] a plan of this magnitude when you are still in the process of creating a basic infrastructure for your country.”

He added that he hoped President Obiang could move forward “as soon as possible” on fulfilling the commitments he made publicly in his June 28 Cape Town speech, including “protecting human rights and democratic institutions, such as a free and independent press, strong and viable opposition parties, and an independent judiciary,” including the rights to due process and the right to appeal verdicts

The Archbishop also expressed his support for President Obiang’s “continued commitment to the Social Development fund, to use your energy revenues for the people and children and education and housing. I noted in your speech you itemized over \$1 billion of such spending in the last year alone.”

Archbishop Tutu promised to “publicly endorse specific developments in your transparency and reform program if and when implemented” and to “encourage the leading international human rights, democracy and transparency NGOs to accept your invitation in your Cape Town speech to visit your country, see the situation on the ground, and to study what is happening there.”

He added: “I hope and trust that human rights organizations will extend a hand to help you in the process of reform.”

In President Obiang’s letter to Archbishop Tutu, Mr. Obiang acknowledged that “the simple endowment of infrastructure is not sufficient to reach the success we desire. It is therefore essential to have qualified and experienced people who are capable of transforming into reality the noble objectives contained in my Cape Town speech. We also need to be able to count on the support of individuals and prestigious international institutions that believe in our determination to develop a modern nation.”

Archbishop Tutu, who won a Nobel Peace prize in 1984 for his anti-apartheid leadership in South Africa as well as his work for the oppressed and for human rights, concluded: “I hope I may be able to visit your country sometime in the future. God bless you.”

Archbishop Tutu was also awarded the Albert Schweitzer Price for Humanitarianism in 1986, the Gandhi Peace Price in 2005, and the President Medal of Freedom in 2009.

Copies of Archbishop Tutu’s letter and President Obiang’s response are attached to this release.

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